



## *Exercise 2*

# Overcome Negative Self-Talk

Even though I have a lot more to say in the following chapters, this exercise will get you started with the process of Accepting yourself, healing your mind and steering your life into a positive direction.

Make good use of your journal while doing this exercise. Writing down your thoughts greatly increases the power and effectiveness of the process, because you are lifting your thoughts out of the recesses of your mind and up into the light of day of your Awareness, where you are taking control of your life. Once recorded, you can then delve deeper into what you have written to gain more perspective and insight.

What this exercise is about is learning to be the wise, loving parent to your own vulnerable and confused human-self. If you persist, this exercise will enable you to experience love as something that you can access internally. You are always within the embrace of Universal Love and you access this Love at any time through actively and responsibly caring for yourself - by being a representative of this Universal Love to yourself.

- This is not an exercise to do just once. In order to gain positive control of your mind, it is essential to do this exercise, in some form, on a daily basis, at least until your new positive and loving self-talk starts to feel normal and natural.
- Therefore, practice it ongoing as you continue to work through this book. Also, don't expect to be very skilled at it at first. It is normal to not be used to looking within and being there for yourself.
- Read the exercise through first at least a few times before you start, in order to gain a good feel for the process.



1. Today, right this moment, make a rock solid commitment to treat yourself and speak to yourself only with Acceptance, Loving Kindness, Compassion and Forgiveness. This will also help to bring your self-rejecting thoughts more into focus.
2. Keep a little notebook with you always, that you can use to write down your self-rejecting thoughts as you become Aware of them (our mobile phones are now useful for this purpose). Don't be surprised by how often you observe such self-destructive thoughts.
3. The more you lift your negative self-talk into your Awareness, the more power you will have over it. The more familiar you become with it, the more you will be able to identify it in the moment and make a better choice.
4. Identify the negative self-talk, *but do not identify with it*. Recognise that if any thoughts coming from your mind are unkind/unloving towards you, then they are the product of past confusion. You are learning to no longer reinforce this insidious form of self-harm.
5. Also, understand that you are not doing this to become self-indulgent, but to become self-responsible, to become the wise and loving forever parent to yourself.
6. When you observe negative self-talk, write it down in that moment, or as soon as you can, before you forget. Of course you are not going to manage to do this perfectly. Just have a go each day and be as persistent as you can. In that moment or later on that day or evening, make time to focus your Awareness on the self-rejecting thoughts you have recorded. Feel into what these thoughts are doing to you. Write down what you discover, while remembering that you have a right to be human and that this process is a starting point to making a positive difference to your life.
7. As you contemplate your self-rejecting thoughts, imagine this human-self, that you are putting down, is you when you were a vulnerable child just wanting to be accepted and loved. Look back at how vulnerable and powerless you were as that child, knowing also that you have done the best you could with the Awareness that you have had, from then, right up to now.
8. Always remember that you have a right to be human. You have a right to learn and grow. Self-Acceptance must always be your foundation. Children, as well as adults, learn and grow to be happy and healthy in an environment of Unconditional Love. You are now taking control of the environment that your mind/your humanness/your inner-child lives in. You are setting things right. That is your power of Conscious-Awareness.
9. Examine the negative self-talk that you have identified so far and explore and write down positive

- self-accepting/caring/loving things to keep saying to yourself instead. Let your feelings guide you.
10. Pay attention to any resistance to being kind to yourself that may be coming from your old conditioning. Spend time exploring and writing about this to compassionately connect to the dilemma that you were in as a child, adolescent and young adult. Reflect on these memories with the Awareness of how powerless you were then and how you could not avoid taking on negative conditioning. Know that this is your life and your mind and you now have the power to take charge, one day at a time.
  11. As you become more skilled with this process, you will gain more of a feel for the right things to say to yourself. On a daily basis, use your new positive self-talk, that you explore and right down on a daily basis, to keep countering the negative. If you persist, your new positive self-talk will soon be triggered along with the negative, increasingly neutralising the negative. In time, the positive will overtake and replace the negative. This will be the result of your never-give-up persistence.
  12. You will also notice that some recurring negative self-talk will give way easily, while other negative self-talk will be more persistent, held in place by deeper, more entrenched conditioning. Don't be discouraged. Keep working with it and keep working through the rest of the book, which will give you more instruction on how to overcome these more challenging mindsets.
  13. If you experience others putting you down, feel into how that affected you. If it hurt you, or in other words, if you think their confusion had something to do with you, look closely at what you are thinking about yourself. ***Even if you made a mistake, you don't deserve to be belittled or spoken to harshly. You have a right to be human.*** Let go of the other person and focus on how their harsh words have exposed doubts you have about yourself. This is about you caring for yourself and therefore taking charge of your own life. Are you expecting others to be the foundation you need to be for yourself? Are you giving your power away by making others responsible for your worth? If you do need to set boundaries to protect yourself from negative people, as a part of Caring for yourself, this exercise will help you gain the necessary clarity and courage to do so.
  14. Remember, you ***did the best you could in the past with the Awareness that you had***, right up to this moment. This also applies to your efforts now. Forgive yourself for your human mistakes and realise that you now have an opportunity to treat yourself differently and to work toward healing the wounds of the past. Forgiving yourself is an important step toward living this new way of life.
  15. Be open to whatever emotions that are released during this process. Do your best to let them flow while breathing deeply and slowly, which will help you manage the emotions more effectively. Acknowledging your own pain works the same as when someone else important to you acknowledges your pain. This is not about indulging in self-pity/being a victim, it is embracing your own mind into your heart, like compassionately embracing your own upset child. Staying with your vulnerable emotions, with your Self-Accepting and Compassionate heart open to yourself, is very important for healing. It is about helping your inner-child/human-self feel that he/she is in the presence of your Love, simply by you being there. Let your emotions flow and trust that any emotional release will pass naturally and have a chance to heal in the process while you compassionately stay open to it. This is one of the great powers of Awareness. Much of this pent-up emotion comes from your childhood. You were so small and powerless then. It is normal

to feel that uncomfortable vulnerability again as the emotions are coming through your consciousness now. This can be challenging at first. Remember that you are an adult now with Conscious-Awareness. These challenging emotions are coming from memories where you were powerless, but you now have the power to be there for yourself in a way that you couldn't as a child.

16. Don't try to force or fix your emotions. Go gently. Just learning to be there for yourself is enough for now. So much more will be said about emotional healing in the following chapters, particularly with Step 3.
17. You don't have to be experiencing emotional release. There are no shoulds or shouldn'ts. It is more about learning to be there for yourself and acknowledging what you are feeling and validating that you have a right to be human.
18. To help you recognise what is for your highest good, consider viewing these new ways of talking to yourself and caring for yourself in the long term. Would it enhance your life in the short, medium and long-term? How does that compare to the old negative self-talk?
19. Don't be concerned about finding the perfect answers. It is all a journey of trial and error. Any step toward genuinely caring for yourself is going to improve your life. Be free and open to learn from each attempt to talk and act more lovingly toward yourself.
20. Write out on a card or in your pocket-book or phone your new positive self-talk and refer to it regularly in order to keep your Conscious-Awareness ahead of the old destructive habits. Give yourself as many reminders as you can. Your Awareness needs as much help as you can give it.
21. You can program your mobile phone to give you positive messages every couple of hours. Regular reminders are essential for reprogramming the old conditioning. Habits are formed through repetition. You are now pulling the power out of the old destructive thinking habits and putting that power into creating good thinking habits.
22. When you catch yourself again in a state of self-rejection, you increasingly have these new strategies that you are creating to fall back on. When you keep referring to these new positive intentions, you will increasingly gain more clarity of the consequences of self-rejection. You will also have more clarity around how to treat yourself with loving kindness in that moment.
23. Continue to put this exercise into practice on a daily basis. Try to see this as your new lifestyle, not some unrealistic quick fix. It is not about getting it right. It is about having a go and learning from each experience. Recognise that by making this your new lifestyle, you will naturally continue to heal and grow. No matter how tough, persistent and multi-layered the old self-destructive mind-habits are, they will inevitably give way, so long as you patiently, gently, but with determination, *persist*, with a never-give-up attitude. Therefore, easy dose it, but keep doing it. There is no “are we there yet”. There is you, your mind, now and every day. Feed your mind positive energy every day, because it will grow on what you feed it. If you keep doing this, realising your increasing, self-created experience of happiness and fulfilment is inevitable.

From "Five Steps to Freedom" by Phil Golding

